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THE MECHANISM OF LABOUR

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THE MECHANISM OF LABOUR

DEFINITION OF TERMS USED.

Lie. This indicates the relation of the long axis of the child to the long axis of the mother's uterus, i.e., longitudinal, oblique, transverse.

Attitude. The relation of the different parts of the child to each other, i.e., flexion is the normal attitude when the child lies with the head and spine flexed, the arms flexed on the chest and the legs and thighs flexed.

Presentation. The part of the child which lies lowest in the uterus.

Position. This is a term used to describe the relation of a particular part of the child to a particular point of the mother's pelvis.

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1st VERTEX or LEFT OCCIPITO ANTERIOR. (L.O.A.)

Lie, position and attitude.

The child lies in the long axis of the mother's uterus in an attitude of flexion. The back of the child is to the mother's left and anterior, limbs to the right and posterior.

The sagittal suture enters in the right oblique diameter of the pelvis. The occiput points to the left foreman ovale and the sinciput to the right sacro-iliac joint.

Mechanism.

The head descends with increased flexion, the occiput being in advance meets the resistance of the pelvic floor and rotates forward $\frac{1}{8}$ th of a circle into the free space under the pubic arch. The sagittal suture is now in the antero-posterior diameter of the outlet. Further descent occurs and the forehead, face and chin sweep the perineum and the head is born by extension.

Restitution takes place, by which the head returns to its original position.

The shoulders descend, the anterior shoulder being in advance meets the resistance of the pelvic floor and rotates forward $\frac{1}{8}$ th of a circle into the free space under the pubic arch, causing at the same time external rotation of the head, the occiput now pointing to the mother's left thigh.

With further descent the posterior shoulder sweeps the perineum. The child is then born by lateral flexion.

2nd VERTEX or RIGHT OCCIPITO ANTERIOR. (R.O.A.)

Lie, position and attitude.

Mechanism.

As above, substituting "left" for "right" and vice versa.

3rd VERTEX or RIGHT OCCIPITO POSTERIOR. (R.O.P.).

Lie, position and attitude.

The child lies in the long axis of the mother's uterus in an attitude of flexion. The back of the child to the mother's right and posterior, limbs to the left and anterior.

The sagittal suture enters in the right oblique diameter of the pelvis. The occiput points to the right sacro-iliac joint and the sinciput to the left foreman ovale.

Mechanism.

The head descends with increased flexion, the occiput being in advance meets the resistance of the pelvic floor and rotates forward $\frac{3}{8}$ ths of a circle into the free space under the pubic arch during which time the shoulders change into the right oblique diameter of the pelvis. The sagittal suture is now in the antero-posterior diameter of the outlet. Further descent occurs and the forehead, face and chin sweep the perineum and the head is born by extension.

Restitution takes place, by which the head returns to its original position.

The shoulders descend, the anterior shoulder being in advance meets the resistance of the pelvic floor and rotates forward $\frac{1}{8}$ th of a circle into the free space under the pubic arch, causing at the same time external rotation of the head, the occiput now pointing to the mother's right thigh.

With further descent the posterior shoulder sweeps the perineum. The child is then born by lateral flexion.

PERSISTENT OCCIPITO POSTERIOR.

Lie, position and attitude.

The child lies in the long axis of the mother's uterus in an attitude of incomplete flexion. Position as above.

Mechanism.

The head descends incompletely flexed, the sinciput being in advance meets the resistance of the pelvic floor and rotates forward $\frac{1}{8}$ th of a circle so that the root of the nose lies under the pubic arch. The sagittal suture is now in the antero-posterior diameter of the outlet. With further descent the occiput sweeps the perineum by a movement of flexion, the remainder of the face is then born by a movement of extension.

Restitution and delivery as above.

4th VERTEX or LEFT OCCIPITO POSTERIOR. (L.O.P.).

Lie, position and attitude.

Mechanism.

As above, substituting "left" for "right" and vice versa.

1st BREECH or LEFT SACRO ANTERIOR. (L.S.A.).

Lie, position and attitude.

The child lies in the long axis of the mother's uterus in an attitude of complete flexion. The back of the child to the mother's left and anterior, limbs to the right and posterior.

The bi-trochanteric diameter, 4 inches, enters in the left oblique diameter of the pelvis with the sacrum pointing to the left foreman ovale.

Mechanism.

The breech descends, the anterior buttock being in advance meets the resistance of the pelvic floor and rotates forward $\frac{1}{8}$ th of a circle, so that the breech is in the antero-posterior diameter of the outlet. As the trunk descends lateral flexion occurs to allow the child to adapt itself to the curve of the birth canal; the anterior buttock is born first followed by the posterior buttock.

The shoulders descend in the same diameter as the hips, the rotation of the breech carries the rest of the trunk with it so that the child faces laterally. The anterior shoulder is born from under the pubic arch, the posterior shoulder sweeps the perineum and is born.

N.B.—If there is plenty of room the shoulders and head come through in the antero-posterior and transverse diameters of the brim respectively. If the fit is tight, they may come through in an oblique diameter.

The head, fully flexed, enters the pelvis with the sagittal suture in the transverse diameter of the brim. With descent, the occiput is rotated so that the nape of the neck is under the pubic arch with the sagittal suture in the antero-posterior diameter of the outlet. The chin, face, brow and vertex sweep the perineum so that the head is born by flexion.

2nd BREECH or RIGHT SACRO ANTERIOR. (R.S.A.).

Lie, position and attitude.

Mechanism.

As above, substituting "left" for "right" and vice versa.

N.B.—SACRO POSTERIOR POSITIONS.

In sacro posterior positions there is very little difference because there is always one anterior buttock, it always rotates to the front as described.

3rd FACE or LEFT MENTO ANTERIOR. (L.M.A.).

Lie, position and attitude.

The child lies in the long axis of the mother's uterus in an attitude of extension. The head and spine are extended but the limbs are flexed upon the chest. The back of the child lies to the mother's right and posterior, limbs to the left and anterior.

The long diameter of the face enters in the right oblique diameter of the pelvis. The chin points to the left foreman ovale and the sinciput to the right sacro-iliac joint.

Mechanism.

The head descends with further extension, the chin being in advance meets the resistance of the pelvic floor and rotates forward $\frac{1}{8}$ th of a circle into the free space under the pubic arch and is freed. The long diameter of the face is now the antero-posterior diameter of the outlet. Further descent occurs and the face, sinciput, vertex and occiput sweep the perineum and the head is born by flexion.

Restitution takes place, by which the head returns to its original position.

The shoulders descend, the anterior shoulder being in advance meets the resistance of the pelvic floor and rotates forward $\frac{1}{8}$ th of a circle into the free space under the pubic arch, causing at the same time external rotation of the head with the chin now pointing to the mother's left thigh.

With further descent the posterior shoulder sweeps the perineum. The child is then born by lateral flexion.

4th FACE or RIGHT MENTO ANTERIOR. (R.M.A.).

Lie, position and attitude.

Mechanism.

As above, substituting "left" for "right" and vice versa.

1st FACE or RIGHT MENTO POSTERIOR. (R.M.P.).

Lie, position and attitude.

The child lies in the long axis of the mother's uterus in an attitude of extension. The head and spine are extended but the limbs are flexed upon the chest. The back of the child is to the mother's left and anterior, limbs to the right and posterior.

The long diameter of the face enters in the right oblique diameter of the pelvis. The chin points to the right sacro-iliac joint and the sinciput to the left foreman ovale.

Mechanism.

The head descends with further extension, the chin being in advance meets the resistance of the pelvic floor and rotates forward $\frac{3}{8}$ ths of a circle into the free space under the pubic arch and is freed during which time the shoulders change into the right oblique diameter of the pelvis. The long diameter of the face is now in the antero-posterior diameter of the outlet. Further descent occurs and the face, sinciput, vertex and occiput sweep the perineum and the head is born by flexion.

Restitution takes place, by which the head returns to its original position.

The shoulders descend, the anterior shoulder being in advance meets the resistance of the pelvic floor and rotates forward $\frac{1}{8}$ th of a circle into the free space under the pubic arch causing at the same time external rotation of the head with the chin now pointing to the mother's right thigh.

With further descent the posterior shoulder sweeps the perineum. The child is then born by lateral flexion.

PERSISTENT MENTO POSTERIOR.

Lie, position and attitude.

The child lies in the long axis of the mother's uterus with the head incompletely extended. Position as above.

Mechanism.

The head descends incompletely extended, the sinciput being in advance meets the resistance of the pelvic floor and rotates forward $\frac{1}{8}$ th of a circle so that the chin is carried back into the hollow of the sacrum.

In this case *normal delivery is impossible*, except in the case of a very small child.

2nd FACE or LEFT MENTO POSTERIOR. (L.M.P.).

Lie, position and attitude.

Mechanism.

As above, substituting "left" for "right" and vice versa.

August, 1947.

The first of these is the fact that the United States is a young nation, and that its history is a history of growth and expansion. The second is the fact that the United States is a nation of immigrants, and that its history is a history of the struggle for assimilation and the creation of a new American identity. The third is the fact that the United States is a nation of diverse peoples, and that its history is a history of the struggle for equality and the recognition of the rights of all citizens.

The fourth is the fact that the United States is a nation of ideas, and that its history is a history of the struggle for the realization of the American dream. The fifth is the fact that the United States is a nation of power, and that its history is a history of the struggle for the maintenance of the American system. The sixth is the fact that the United States is a nation of hope, and that its history is a history of the struggle for the achievement of the American ideal.



The seventh is the fact that the United States is a nation of progress, and that its history is a history of the struggle for the advancement of the human race. The eighth is the fact that the United States is a nation of freedom, and that its history is a history of the struggle for the preservation of the American way of life. The ninth is the fact that the United States is a nation of justice, and that its history is a history of the struggle for the establishment of a more perfect union.

The tenth is the fact that the United States is a nation of peace, and that its history is a history of the struggle for the maintenance of world peace. The eleventh is the fact that the United States is a nation of love, and that its history is a history of the struggle for the achievement of world harmony.

The twelfth is the fact that the United States is a nation of faith, and that its history is a history of the struggle for the realization of the American dream. The thirteenth is the fact that the United States is a nation of hope, and that its history is a history of the struggle for the achievement of the American ideal.